

THE PORT WASHINGTON PLAY TROUPE PRESENTS

THE LUX RADIO THEATRE'S

IT'S A

WONDERFUL LIFE

ADAPTED
BY

ROBERT J. NISSEN

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14TH AT 7:30 PM

THE PORT WASHINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

PORT WASHINGTON, NEW YORK



“It’s A Wonderful Life” Cast & Their Roles

Toni Allen – Ma Bailey; Libby Collins

David Barnett- Peter “Pop” Bailey; Ed; Bridge Keeper; Sheriff; Carter the Bank Examiner

Geri Dejohn- Grumpy Old Woman; Hortense the Bank Teller

Judy Doyle – Rhoda; Cynthia Hillcastle

Gina Farasciano – Janie Bailey; Charlene; Tilly the Secretary

Robert Gold - Ernie Bishop the Cab Driver; Pinky the Bar Bouncer; Dr. Campbell; Welch, Husband of a School Teacher

Stefanie Kerkenides – Young George Bailey; Pete Bailey; Mrs. Thompson

Robin Kirkpatrick – Mrs. Hatch; Zuzu Bailey

Brian E. Long - George Bailey

Liam Marsigliano – Harry Bailey; Sam Wainwright; Radio Commercial Announcer

Joe McPartlin – Program Announcer; Henry F. Potter; Nick the Bartender; Bert the Police Officer

Gary Noren – Emil Gower the Pharmacist; Uncle Billy Bailey; Giuseppe Martini the Bartender

Gary Tifeld – Joseph the Angel & Sound Effects Technician

Margaret Werner – Mary Hatch

Ken Young – Clarence Oddbody, an angel in pursuit of his wings

Co-produced and co-directed by
Robert Gold and Pamela Meadows

Musical Director - David Barnett

Sound effects design by Gary Tifeld

“It’s A Wonderful Life” (1946) Production and Trivia Information

The film “It’s A Wonderful Life” was based on a 1943 short story “The Greatest Gift” by Philip Van Doren Stern. It was self-published as a booklet in 1943 and later published as a book in 1944.

Philip Stern also sold it to *Reader’s Scope* magazine, which published the story in its December 1944 issue. He also sold it to the magazine *Good Housekeeping*, which published it under a different title “The Man Who Was Never Born” in its January 1945 issue, which was published in December 1944.

The film takes place from 1919 to December 24, 1945.

The setting of Bedford Falls is a fictional town in upstate New York. It is a combination of two real towns: Bedford Hills (in Westchester County) and Seneca Falls (midway between Rochester and Syracuse). Elmira is said to be near Bedford Falls, but this statement is true of Seneca Falls.

The film was ranked as the No. 1 Most Inspirational Movie of All Time by the American Film Institute (2006).

Director Frank Capra often said that this was his favorite of all his films.

The part of George Bailey was originally developed at another studio with Cary Grant earmarked for the role. When Frank Capra inherited the project, he rewrote it to suit James Stewart.

James Stewart cited George Bailey as being his favorite character he ever played, but stated in several interviews that “Harvey” (1950) was his favorite movie, which he starred in.

Frank Capra filmed a number of sequences that were later cut; the only remnants are rare stills that have been unearthed.

A number of alternative endings were considered, with Capra's first script having George fall to his knees saying The Lord's Prayer (the script called for an opening scene with the townspeople in prayer). Feeling an overly religious tone didn't have the emotional impact of family and friends coming to George's rescue, the closing scenes were rewritten.

At \$3.7 million, this was a very expensive independent production. In its initial box office run, it only earned \$3.3 million. Initially a box-office flop, the film became a cherished holiday tradition in the United States.

Due to a clerical error at the NTA's copyright office, the copyright was not renewed when it expired in 1974. It became public domain, meaning anyone who could obtain a print could broadcast it without paying royalties. Local stations aired it dozens of times between Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. In the 1990s, after a series of court battles, the NTA's successor, Republic Pictures, re-acquired the rights to the film because they owned the short story source material ("The Greatest Gift") and the film's score, which were still copyrighted.

"It's A Wonderful Life" on Radio

James Stewart and Donna Reed reprised their roles in 1947 on radio, first on "The Lux Radio Theatre" and then on "Camel Screen Guild Theatre." The "Lux" version aired in March; the "Screen Guild" version aired December 29th.

"Screen Director's Playhouse" broadcast a 30-minute radio adaptation of the movie on May 8, 1949 with James Stewart reprising his film role.

"It's A Wonderful Life" the Colorized Version

In 1986, a colorized version of the film was released to significant controversy. The genesis stemmed from a reneged deal be-

tween Frank Capra and Colorization Inc., the producers of this version. Capra was to have invested in half of the colorization work in exchange for creative control and part-ownership. However, Colorization Inc. realized that, since the film was supposedly in the public domain, they could do all the work and let Capra go. This helped to create an outcry among filmmakers and their supporters that led to all subsequent colorized versions of films bearing a notice stating that they were not authorized by the picture's creators. This version was pulled from distribution in 1993 when the film's copyright was restored, but a new colorized version was produced under the authorization of Paramount Pictures and released in 2007.

"It's A Wonderful Life" 1977 Television Remake

"It Happened One Christmas" was a 1977 television version of the movie starring Marlo Thomas as the protagonist Mary Bailey Hatch, Wayne Rogers as George Hatch, Orson Welles as Henry F. Potter, and Cloris Leachman as Clara, an angel in search of her wings.

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"Missa Brevis in F Major" by W.A. Mozart

"Fantasia on Christmas Carols" by Ralph Vaughan Williams
Christmas songs and carols with audience sing-along

- Performed with Chamber Orchestra and Accompaniment -
Directed by Craig S. Tocher

Organist: Eric Birk | Pianist: Bernadette Hoke

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"Count Your Blessings" - Brian
"It's Only A Paper Moon" - Ken
"S'Wonderful" - Liam
"Bewitched Bothered And Bewildered" - Judy
"Happy Holidays" - Ensemble

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Falconer's Florist: The title sponsor
of tonight's production
Cover art by Christopher Michaels
Hospitality by Gina Farasciano, Robin Fitzpatrick,
and Stefanie Kerkenides
Musical background for reception by Mark Mastrocinque
Desserts contributed by Toscanini Ristoranti Italiano and
Neraki Greek Mediterranean Grill in Huntington

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